



# RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Office of the Vice President for Research and Applied Learning  
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## About

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## Ten Years Later: Insights on al-Qaeda's Past & Future through Captured Records

The Conflict Records Research Center (CRRC) and the Johns Hopkins University Center for Advanced Governmental Studies hosted a two-day conference in September focusing on what we knew about al-Qaeda before 9/11 and what we have learned over the past 10 years. By also releasing twelve records from its al-Qaeda and Associated Movements (AQAM) collection in conjunction with the conference, CRRC showed how captured records and other primary sources can contribute to our understanding of future challenges from AQAM. These records covered AQAM's policies regarding recruitment, organization, media, training, and terrorist tactics, among other things.

The conference featured addresses and panel presentations by prominent government officials from the legislative and executive branches, along with academics involved in and studying issues related to AQAM. Key themes included:

1) *Al-Qaeda has grown significantly weaker.* Several panelists referenced Defense Secretary Panetta's claim that a "strategic defeat" of al-Qaeda is "within reach." In the ten years since the 9/11 attacks, al-Qaeda has grown significantly weaker and virtually incapable of launching large-scale, spectacular attacks similar to those against the World Trade Center and Pentagon. Many panelists spoke about the declining threat of al-Qaeda, suggesting that it should not be the primary focus of U.S. national security policy and that, in fact, a refocus of military, intelligence, and policy issues is needed. While AQAM may be losing the larger war on terror, their desire to wage jihad continues despite increased cooperation between special operations and the CIA, and dramatic changes and reorganization within the Intelligence Community.

2) *Al-Qaeda is nonetheless becoming an increasingly innovative adversary, which demands a more nuanced U.S. approach to counterterrorism.* Al-Qaeda is "adopting a strategy of innovation," according to one speaker. While overall counterterrorism efforts have limited al-Qaeda's ability to launch traditional, large-scale attacks, the group continues to find new ways to manifest its message of violence, such as the mail-bombs sent to Chicago-area synagogues, bombs strapped to underwear or cars in large, public places, and cyber attacks on electrical grids or financial systems. Another speaker cited the creation of the

National Counterterrorism Center in 2003 as one way to counter this innovation since it is an example of an interagency organization that helps coordinate counterterrorism priorities.

**3) *Al-Qaeda affiliated groups, and other types of terrorists like the “lone wolf” or right-wing terrorist, are on the rise.*** As al-Qaeda becomes increasingly destabilized by U.S. counterterrorism efforts, “affiliate groups are gaining in stature” with “the rise of the individual” and the fall of the central organization, according to one speaker. Noting that “the most precise campaign in the history of warfare” against al-Qaeda in which 8 of the group’s top 20 leaders were killed this year alone, with Osama bin Laden chief among them, another speaker underscored the importance of targeting affiliated movements, adding that if sustained counterterrorism operations against the group continued, within 18 to 24 months core al-Qaeda cohesion and operational capabilities could be degraded to the point that the group could fragment and exist mostly as a propaganda arm and power could devolve to regional affiliates. In addition, the “terrorists next door,” such as the lone wolf, Nidal Malik Hasan of the 2009 Fort Hood shooting, represent “one of our biggest problems,” according to one panelist. Others also highlighted the importance of this challenge, noting that “the reality is that we have many varieties of AQAM and there isn’t one way to dispel the alliance of the affiliates.”

**4) *Winning the war of ideas, rather than military victory, remains paramount.*** Success on the battlefield is only part of the conflict, emphasized one conference panelist referencing another CRRC record circa 1990 on jihadi media strategy as a “means of communication with the population” that discussed “the importance of slogans and truthfulness.” Ideas spread by the media aid in al-Qaeda’s recruitment and mobilization and appeal to a wider audience than ever before, thanks to the Internet. For example, noted one speaker, the late Anwar al-Awlaki gained much popularity and notoriety via the Internet. Counter-radicalization

efforts aimed at winning this war of ideas remain a substantial challenge.

Utilizing the primary source archive at the CRRC, academics and policymakers at the conference were able to examine al-Qaeda’s past in order to offer direction for scholarship and policymaking in the future. This collaboration between academia and government is essential to helping the national security community explore new avenues for providing protection against terrorists.

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### **Al-Qaeda and Associated Movements Records Release**

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The Conflict Records Research Center (CRRC) made available twelve records from its al-Qaeda and Associated Movements (AQAM) collection as part of its 9/11-focused conference entitled “Ten Years Later: Insights on al-Qaeda’s Past & Future through Captured Records.” The event was co-hosted by the Johns Hopkins University Center for Advanced Governmental Studies.

Some of the most interesting records that were recently released include an after action report dated 30 December 1994 about the Air France Flight 8969 hijacking in Algiers by Sunni mujahedeen a few days earlier. The report stated that the major weakness of the operation, which ended when French Gendarmes stormed the plane on the ground in Marseilles and killed the four hijackers, was that the French were able to completely control the message by restricting media access while the plane was on the ground at the Marseilles airport. As a result, all of the drama and terror of the incident occurred inside the plane and away from the public eye. To avoid this problem, the report referenced the effectiveness of Japanese kamikaze attacks during World War II and argued that future al-Qaeda hijackings should be “aerial martyrdom operations,” particularly if they could be conducted over a capital city. Eight years later, in an AQAM after action report marking the one year anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, the author praised the effectiveness of this tactic of “aerial

martyrdom operations” by stating: “The information and terror were pervaded by CNN and other media centers without costing money . . . the paradoxes in this issue are that most of the international media competed to get the first scoop.”

Apart from the publicity afforded by high profile attacks like these, al-Qaeda’s top leadership also remained active in self-promotion even before they gained notoriety for 9/11. In a record circa 1990, al-Qaeda released a message about jihadi media as a “means of communication with the population” that emphasizes “the importance of slogans and truthfulness.” In a CRRC record from ten years later, one of Osama bin Laden’s advisers, Abu Hudaifa, urges al-Qaeda to aggressively use the Internet to establish a public presence through videos, edicts, and other propaganda in order to spread its message to a wider audience.

The CRRC will continue publically releasing records in conjunction with conferences while taking into account legitimate national security concerns, the integrity of the academic process, and risks to innocent individuals. For example, the October 25-27 CRRC conference, co-sponsored by the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, “The Iran-Iraq War: The View from Baghdad,” will focus on newly available documentary evidence from the CRRC’s Saddam Hussein collection. These new materials, including high-level Iraqi government documents and recorded conversations between Saddam and his top deputies, shed new light on the origins of the conflict, its global and regional Cold War context, the decisionmaking process of Iraqi leadership, and a wide variety of other topics.

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### **The Evolving Threat of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb**

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In the Center for Strategic Research’s Strategic Forum No. 268, Andre Le Sage notes that al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) poses the greatest immediate threat of transnational terrorism in northwest Africa and is escalating attacks against regional and Western interests. The U.S.-led Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Part-

nership has focused on building local and regional capacities to combat AQIM, but these efforts have proved insufficient to prevent further attacks, let alone defeat the group. While Algerian counterinsurgency operations in the northeast of that country have degraded the group’s capabilities in the Maghreb, AQIM activity in the Sahel—including Mali, Mauritania, and Niger—has increased dramatically since 2007.

The U.S. needs to be prepared to take more aggressive actions to disrupt, degrade, and ultimately defeat AQIM and should clearly determine in advance what level of increased AQIM activity would represent a direct threat to U.S. interests warranting a more robust response. First, the Department of State needs to place more pressure on the governments of Mali, Algeria, Mauritania, and Niger to take coordinated action against AQIM. Second, the U.S. Intelligence Community needs to work with European and African counterparts to build a better understanding of AQIM’s vulnerabilities and how they can be leveraged. Third, if coordinated and resourced properly, simultaneous and internationally supported military action should be considered. Movement of regional forces into northern Mali could effectively box in and destroy AQIM’s Sahelian battalions. The U.S. should consider shifting its special operations activities in the region from training and equipping local militaries through Joint Combined Exchange and Training programs to more aggressive Joint Planning and Advisory Teams. Under this construct, U.S. forces would not engage directly in combat but would provide support to local security initiatives to field patrols in AQIM-dominated territory.

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### **Understanding War in Afghanistan**

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In the NDU Press book *Understanding War in Afghanistan*, Professor Joe Collins of the National War College provides a detailed guide to the history and current issues in the conflict in Afghanistan. The book is designed in part as an introductory text for military leaders, civil servants, diplomats, and students to offer the intellectual basis that they need to begin to prepare for further study

of, or an assignment in, Afghanistan. It analyzes the land and its people, recaps Afghan history, and assesses the current situation, as well as assessing choices for future U.S. policy.

Among many other historical and policy observations, Dr. Collins argues that after a brilliant incursion led by special operations forces and allied air assets, allied forces entered into stability operations which were mainly successful in the 2002-2004 timeframe. With the U.S. gearing up for Iraq, however, the enemy was planning a major insurgency. The war changed from quiet stability operations to a very active insurgency. He contends that, while it is not true that initial U.S. operations in Iraq stripped Afghanistan of what it needed to fight the Taliban, 2004 was the last “good” year for Afghan security. While some intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets and Special Forces units had been removed from Afghanistan, most of the assets needed to continue the operation were wisely “fenced” by Pentagon and U.S. Central Command planners before the invasion of Iraq. It is fair to say, however, that post-2005, as the situation in Afghanistan began to decline, the greater scope and intensity of problems in Iraq prevented reinforcements or additional funds from being sent to Afghanistan.

Professor Collins concludes the book by noting that today, U.S. and allied strategy in Afghanistan is at a crossroads. Fiscal pressures in the West, the end of the (very successful) surge, the turnover of key areas to Afghan security forces, the drawdown of forces, and the preliminary efforts at reconciliation and reintegration add importance to the study of this topic.

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### **Pakistan and the United States: At a Strategic Crossroads**

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The National War College’s (NWC) Professor Mike Mazarr, along with Peter Bergen of the New America Foundation (NAF), Tom Lynch from the Institute for National Strategic Studies and selected members of the NWC-NAF Study Group released their white paper, “Pakistan and the United States: At a Strategic Crossroads,” at a press conference at the NAF on September 1. The paper argues for

a comprehensive new vision and a targeted, prioritized set of policy actions to contribute to the domestic situation in Pakistan and a more sustainable bilateral relationship. Its strategic concept is a collaborative agenda for Pakistan to take its place as a major power in a modernizing South Asia. This concept calls for actions within Pakistan to build the social, political, and economic basis for this vision, as well as a U.S. commitment to support this agenda with critical actions—on trade, peacemaking, and technical support.

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### **Can Federalism Work in Iraq?**

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The Center for Strategic Research sponsored a September 21 conference organized by Minerva Fellow Dr. Denise Natali that examined the impact of Iraqi federalism on governance, economic development and regional security, and the policy options for the U.S. as it withdraws its military forces from the country. The conference was also particularly noteworthy owing to the substantial representation by senior Iraqi officials from the government, non governmental organizations, and academia.

The key finding of the conference is that Iraqi federalism has a chance to succeed, but only with significant modifications. Most participants were relatively positive about the idea of federalism but critical of the way it has been applied in Iraq. One of the biggest problems is the 2005 constitution. While assuring minority group rights, the constitution’s intentional ambiguity on resource and revenue-sharing and on security has created new tensions between Baghdad, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), and local administrations. Another unintended consequence has been greater inefficiency in governance and economic development. Even though the provinces were bestowed with large powers, they have neither the institutional capacity nor resources to manage or implement large-scale projects, particularly in the energy sector. Some argued that given the significant role of petroleum in the Iraqi economy, a more centralized system would be most effective in energy development. Others pressed for greater clarity in authority and responsibilities between the central government, KRG,

and local administrations, either through bilateral agreements or special arrangements. Participants had mixed views on the U.S. withdrawal. Most agreed that the new security challenges in Iraq cannot be addressed by U.S. forces, while others argued for an expanded U.S. presence, stating that Iraq's military would not be ready until 2020 at the earliest.

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### Turkey's General Dilemma

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The National War College's Professor Omer Taspinar argues in this *Foreign Affairs Online* article from August 2011 that the days of military coups in Turkey are officially over, given the recent imprisonments of half of all Turkish admirals and one out of ten generals for plotting against the government, along with the July 29 resignation of the military's chief of staff and subsequent early retirements of the heads of the army, navy, and air force. Supporters of President Erdogan and his party, the Justice and Development Party, argue that the resignation of the commanders is a sign of Turkish democracy's new maturity and its embrace of Western-style civilian supremacy over the military. Detractors, however, express serious concern about the disappearance of checks and balances that they believe have kept civilian governments from becoming authoritarian.

In fact, Turkey is not yet a liberal democracy. But it is certainly moving in the right direction. Those who argue that the military was an essential check on civilian politics should understand that Turkey is now becoming a "normal" democracy, where elections, public opinion, opposition parties, the parliament, the media, and civil society all exert more power. And unlike the military, these institutions have a legitimate role to play in politics.

Meanwhile, Professor Taspinar notes, in order to prove that Turkey is not becoming more authoritarian, Erdogan must address the critical challenges facing the country—the Kurdish question, human rights, and freedom of expression—by creating a more democratic constitution. If he fails, he will have only himself to blame. For the first time in the republic's history, Turkey's performance is totally in the civilian's hands.

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### The Paradox of Power: Sino-American Strategic Restraint in an Era of Vulnerability

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The U.S. and China each have or will soon have the ability to inflict grave harm upon the other by nuclear attack, attacks on satellites, or attacks on computer networks. Paradoxically, as David Gompert and Phillip Saunders argue in this NDU Press book, each country's strategic vulnerability is growing despite their increased power. Particularly since September 11, 2001, Americans have sensed this vulnerability. The extent to which the Chinese understand it is unclear.

Both countries are familiar with vulnerability to nuclear attack. But the U.S. and China are also becoming exposed to damage in space and cyberspace because of their growing reliance on those domains for their prosperity and security, as well as each side's increasing antisatellite (ASAT) and cyber war capabilities. All three strategic domains are "offense dominant"—technologically, economically, and operationally. Defenses against nuclear, ASAT, and cyber weapons are difficult and expensive, yielding diminishing results against the offensive capabilities of large, advanced, and determined states such as the U.S. and China.

Curbing the dangers associated with attacks in these domains through nuclear, ASAT, or cyber war disarmament is largely impractical and unverifiable. Given the futility of strategic defense and the plunging costs of attack, Gompert and Saunders argue that the U.S. and China must consider ways of mitigating their growing vulnerabilities in these domains by mutual restraint in the use of strategic offensive capabilities. The bedrock of such restraint would be mutual deterrence in each domain, based on the fear of devastating retaliation. Mutual restraint means that China and the United States would agree not to attack each other in the nuclear and space domains and would avoid any attacks on computer networks critical to the other's well-being—"strategic cyberspace."

Agreement with China to exercise mutual restraint across these strategic domains would serve U.S. interests in mitigating critical vulnerabilities; reducing

the importance of nuclear weapons; permitting full and productive exploitation of space and cyberspace; and unburdening Sino-American relations of the threat of strategic conflict. The U.S. should propose such restraint, founded on mutual deterrence in all three domains, including reciprocal pledges not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, to interfere with access to space or to attack the other nation's strategic cyberspace. The U.S. should insist that these pledges also proscribe such attacks on allies, thus preserving its right to retaliate if an ally were attacked. In light of risks that China might try to exploit bilateral strategic restraint to seek regional dominance, the U.S. should state its expectation that such restraint will strengthen prudence and security at all levels. Given China's reluctance to acknowledge its strategic vulnerability and the state of Chinese civil-military relations, it may be neither realistic nor essential to get Chinese agreement on all terms soon. Nonetheless, the U.S. should lay out its complete framework to China, after first consulting with U.S. allies, and then pursue it patiently and persistently. In parallel, the U.S. should reiterate that its purpose in all three domains is deterrence and that its retaliatory capabilities and resolve should not be doubted.

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### **Chinese Military Transparency**

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In the Center for the Study of Chinese Military Affairs Strategic Forum No. 269, Dr. Phillip Saunders and Ross Rustici assess the relative transparency of China's seventh defense white paper, "China's National Defense in 2010," which was released on March 31, 2011. The authors employ an Institute for National Strategic Studies methodology for evaluating military transparency, which indicates that China's 2010 white paper receives lower transparency ratings than the 2008 edition and provides less information than defense white papers of other major Asia-Pacific powers. The new defense white paper provides relatively little new data and less detail about Chinese military capabilities and modernization efforts than previous editions. Consistent with

past white papers, this one does not provide any information about specific weapons systems or about nuclear forces and modernization efforts. The Chinese maintain that transparency benefits the strong at the expense of the weak, and emphasize the importance of transparency about strategic intentions rather than capabilities. In this regard, the 2010 white paper highlights China's defensive policy and states that "China will never seek hegemony . . . no matter how its economy develops." Although Chinese military officers express the desire to increase military transparency as a means of reassuring neighboring countries about China's benign intentions, the new document does not make much progress toward that goal. The China Center also worked with the Center for Naval Analyses' China Studies program to co-sponsor a roundtable discussing the 2010 defense white paper which was attended by a number of Department of Defense, Department of State, and National Security Council officials.

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### **The Chinese Navy: Expanding Capabilities, Evolving Roles**

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This edited volume published by the NDU Press is based on a conference co-sponsored by the Institute for National Strategic Studies' Center for the Study of Chinese Military Affairs, RAND Corporation, Chinese Council on Advanced Policy Studies, and Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. The chapters highlight the considerable progress made by the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) in developing a more modern force capable of operating in waters near China, within the broader Asian region, and (for some missions) in extra-regional deployments. One key insight is that the PLAN is developing forces and training for a range of different missions. Preparing for a Taiwan contingency in which the PLAN might confront the U.S. Navy is the most urgent and operationally demanding mission, but other tasks such as military diplomacy, nontraditional security missions like the counter-piracy deployment to the Gulf of Aden, and defense of China's maritime claims and interests require different forces and operat-

ing concepts and are not merely “lesser-included cases” of a Taiwan contingency.

Longstanding Chinese concerns over Taiwan, territorial sovereignty in the South and East China Seas, and defense of China’s coast remain “crucially important” missions for the PLAN. However, consistent with Hu Jintao’s 2004 proclamation of “new historic missions” for the PLA as a whole and the subsequent emphasis on the PLA’s ability to accomplish “diverse military tasks,” the PLAN now sees a broader set of roles and missions where naval power can play a useful role. The PLAN is increasingly “casting itself as the protector of China’s economy” in arguing for more resources for naval modernization. The PLAN still confronts some significant obstacles and is faced with serious shortfalls in its operational effectiveness. These shortcomings will require a sustained investment in technologies, personnel, equipment, and doctrinal development if the PLAN hopes to become an effective regional and global naval power.

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### **Korean Futures: Challenges to U.S. Diplomacy of North Korean Regime Collapse**

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In the Center for Strategic Research’s Strategic Perspectives No. 7, Jim Przystup and Ferial A. Saeed focus on diplomatic management of a regime crisis in North Korea. Rather than engage in the development of multiple scenarios, a generic scenario of protracted instability is used to illuminate the challenges the U.S. will face. The objective of this paper is not to predict the future by attempting to identify the most plausible regime collapse scenario. Instead the goal is to provide a framework for analysis and to motivate policymakers to begin to consider how the U.S. would respond to regime collapse and to organize bureaucratic resources accordingly.

Although regime collapse is unlikely, especially in view of China’s interest in sustaining North Korea as a viable state, regime collapse, should it occur, could fundamentally alter the strategic landscape in Asia, potentially in ways that would diminish U.S. influence. The paper seeks to frame the issues, choices, and priorities that will challenge U.S. diplomacy in the event of North Korean

regime collapse: whether to intervene; for what purposes, humanitarian relief, weapons of mass destruction (WMD) elimination; under what auspices; and toward what end states are among the complex choices that will confront the U.S. in a dynamic diplomatic environment. A coordinated diplomatic response will involve the Republic of Korea (ROK) and Japan, as well as China and Russia, each with a complex set of interests and priorities. Organizing the U.S. Government to think through the issues will illuminate the range of actions to be considered no matter what type of crisis occurs.

Among the key findings of the paper are: 1) regime collapse will not end North Korea as a state; China is not likely to permit this to happen; 2) the international community will not endorse ending the North Korean state absent support by a North Korean majority; 3) U.S. national security interests mandate WMD elimination, but U.S. intervention will be particularly difficult and politically problematic; 4) absent support of the ROK and China and North Korean acquiescence, the U.S. will find it difficult to secure and eliminate North Korea’s WMD. The ROK sequences WMD elimination after reunification and is concerned that U.S. military intervention may only encourage Chinese military intervention; 5) China or the U.S. will move the issue to the United Nations Security Council in efforts to constrain the other’s actions and seek legitimacy for intervention; and 6) China and Russia are more concerned about preventing U.S. unilateralism than about WMD elimination.

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### **The Ongoing Insurgency in Southern Thailand**

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In the Center for Strategic Research’s Strategic Perspectives No. 6, Professor Zachary Abuza of the National War College examines the Malay-Muslim-based insurgency that has engulfed the three southernmost provinces in Thailand since 2004. More than 4,500 people have been killed and over 9,000 wounded, making it the most lethal conflict in Southeast Asia. Professor Abuza explains that insurgents continue to target security forces, government officials, and Muslim moderates

who seek accommodation with the Thai state as part of efforts to make the region ungovernable.

Despite better coordination, Abuza argues, Thai counterinsurgency operations are still hampered by bureaucratic infighting and a lack of professionalism. Human rights abuses by security services with blanket immunity under the Emergency Decree continue to instill mistrust. Abuza believes that the new Pheu Thai government under Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra faces intense challenges in the south; its election victory and focus on national reconciliation have already engendered mistrust of the Thai military. The new government will be reluctant to criticize the military's approach, take on the culture of impunity, or push for political autonomy. This will make any devolution of political authority unlikely, limiting chances for a negotiated solution. As a result, Abuza believes, low-level violence is likely to continue indefinitely.

The most important immediate U.S. objective in Thailand is political stability and deepening bilateral economic ties. Open U.S. pressure to do more is likely to be ineffective or even counterproductive, Abuza concludes, and as a result the U.S. should maintain quiet diplomatic pressure on the government to broaden its counterinsurgency efforts as well as offering intelligence and law enforcement assistance, while being cognizant of Thai sensitivity over its sovereignty.

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### **Hybrid Warfare and Transnational Threats: Perspectives for an Era of Persistent Conflict**

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The Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS), with support from the College for International Security Affairs, hosted a September 21 seminar to discuss insights contained in this recently released book. Highlighting the list of seminar speakers was the Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Committee, Rep. Adam Smith (D-WA), who penned the Foreword to the book. In his opening remarks, Rep. Smith focused on the strategic implications of both the broadening array of threats faced by the U.S. and diminished resources. Discussions during the seminar centered on the implications of future threats including hybrids converging in the middle of the conflict spectrum as well

as the high-end asymmetric threat posed by potential rising powers. Discussions also included the need to evaluate the strategic and military cultures of future adversaries that could be very successful at blending orthodox and unorthodox methods in time and space in future conflict.

The book and seminar are part of a broader INSS research program into the character of hybrid threats in the future operating environment. This inquiry supports emerging threats and the future character of contemporary conflict identified in the last two Quadrennial Defense Reviews. Key policy implications include: 1) identification of future threats the U.S. military must be prepared to face; 2) force posture of the U.S. military in terms of the range of threats, and the frequency and consequences of hybrid threats in the future operating environment (risk assessment); 3) impact on potential analytic agenda in terms of how hybrid threats are represented in Department of Defense planning scenarios and force sizing/shaping constructs; and 4) the viability of comprehensive approaches in failed states/ungoverned areas where the incorporation of non military and non governmental resources cannot operate safely due to the lethality of a hybrid threat.

Future research lines could include continued exploration of hybrid threats (HTs) with the U.S.' North Atlantic Treaty Organization partners and with Allied Command Transformation. The gaming of HTs against states (and combinations of states and proxy forces) in Northeast Asia and/or the Middle East could also prove fruitful. Further research into the strategic and military culture of Asian militaries may also be warranted. The insights from the wargames, coupled with research from the Intelligence Community (futures work from the National Intelligence Council and Defense Intelligence Agency) might better inform the Office of the Secretary of Defense or Joint Staff risk assessments, as well as the prioritization of desired and affordable capabilities in the currently tightening fiscal context.

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### **NATO and the Arab Spring**

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The public debate that surrounded the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led Operation *Unified Protector* in Libya gave an impression of an Alliance

in trouble. As Dr. Isabelle Francois of the Center for Transatlantic Security Studies points out in this Transatlantic Current, however, there is a good story to tell. The U.S., as the host of the May 2012 NATO Summit in Chicago, may wish to present the case for a new type of operation and call for a strategy review on Libya in order to develop a balanced approach to Allies' possible contributions to stability in North Africa and the Gulf region.

A strategy review in Chicago could offer three types of deliverables. First, the Allies will be called upon in Chicago to consider their core capabilities for future operations on the basis of the guidance provided by the 2010 Strategic Concept, while taking full account of today's fiscal constraint. It may prove useful to consider reviewing the case of Libya and draw some key conclusions when it comes to defining NATO's core capabilities for limited operations. Secondly, the Libyan crisis can offer some lessons in terms of NATO partnerships. Inviting partners to a NATO strategy review of *Unified Protector* in Chicago would recognize the contribution of NATO partnerships both militarily and politically in terms of the support provided by partners both in the region, such as Qatar, and beyond, such as Sweden. Finally, the interest of emerging powers in the Middle East and North Africa was demonstrated in the various diplomatic efforts toward a negotiated settlement in Libya on the part of Russia, South Africa, and others, and should be recognized by NATO. A strategy review on the Libyan crisis would be an opportunity to engage a broad political dialogue beyond NATO partnerships, reaching out to significant security interlocutors at a time when the U.S. public and Congress seem to focus increasingly beyond Europe. Chicago would be an opportunity for all interested parties to look beyond the superficial level while ensuring that the transatlantic partnership continues to deliver its unique and flexible capabilities in terms of command and control of complex operations when the security environment calls for action.

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### Understanding the Africa Spring

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From June to August 2011, the Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS) hosted a series of consultations

with leading democracy experts to take stock of a string of democratic breakthroughs in Africa in 2011. Most prominent have been the unprecedented popular uprisings across North Africa. The grievances that fueled these demonstrations have resonated deeply with many African citizens throughout the continent and have triggered, in turn, protests demanding greater political rights and governmental accountability in some dozen sub-Saharan African countries. Simultaneous to events in North Africa, Guineans selected a president through competitive elections for the first time ever. Niger reinstated civilian leadership following a military coup a year earlier. The electoral victor in Côte d'Ivoire was finally able to take office after a tense five month stand-off. And Nigeria made noteworthy progress in building democratic institutions by holding a widely touted transparent presidential election.

Working group participants attempted to take stock of the significance of these developments and how likely they are to be replicated elsewhere in Africa. The group concluded that the bar of democratic expectations in Africa had indeed been raised. Greater awareness of governance norms around the world and images of Egyptians, Tunisians, and Libyans toppling some of the most powerful regimes on the continent, have emboldened African citizens to be less accepting of unconstitutional transitions of power, elite corruption, and institutionalized inequity. As a result, a fundamental shift in state-society relations in Africa is under way. Nonetheless, there remain entrenched countervailing forces leaving the trajectory of democratization on the continent in doubt. The insights gained from these discussions will inform an ACSS Special Report to be released in fall 2011 that gives further shape to these unfolding developments and the implications they hold for African democracy.

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### Stress-testing South Africa: The Tenuous Foundations of One of Africa's Stable States

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South Africa stands at the early stages of a spiral of instability, according to Dr. Assis Malaquias, author of this Africa Center for Strategic Studies Research Paper. Elite competition for financial and

political resources available through the state is driving worsening political violence within and between competing political parties. For the most part this occurs at the local level where intimidation and assassination are used to ensure electoral success. Much of this violence exists in a grey area where the distinction between politics and crime is blurred. Elite exploitation of state resources, in turn, feeds public anger over inequality. Since the end of apartheid, steadily rising inequality has deepened the divide between a wealthy minority and a poor majority. As citizens see many elected officials and civil servants enrich themselves by abusing their influence and authority, this frustration readily ignites into violent protest.

Fortunately, South Africans still overwhelmingly support the democratic process and view the government as legitimate. From this foundation, the state can move to control emerging political violence and reverse ebbing public trust. This will require breaking up the current intertwining of political authority and economic opportunity. To do so will entail reducing the patronage value political office currently affords, while establishing a more significant and institutionalized role for independent watchdog groups. Citizens must also see tangible evidence that government is interested in the socioeconomic priorities of ordinary people.

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### **Sifting Through the Layers of Insecurity in the Sahel: The Case of Mauritania**

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Concerns over instability in the Sahel have been on the rise with the return of mercenaries from Libya, the persistence of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), and the growing presence of narcotics traffickers in the region. In this Africa Center for Strategic Studies Africa Security Brief, Cédric Jourde cautions against responding to these threats based solely on what is observable on the surface. Rather, the transborder illicit economy, Islamism, and other phenomena are all constantly shifting and are frequently reappropriated or rejected by actors who interpret and perceive external influences through local lenses.

Regimes in the region that face legitimacy deficits have also been known to wave a false flag of “insecurity” in order to target political opponents or assume greater authority, sometimes with the support of misinformed international partners.

Effectively responding to security challenges in the Sahel requires in-depth understanding of the spectrum of rivalries and the complex and at times contradictory structures of loyalty at play in the region. For communities that have long been excluded from decisionmaking circles, sustained development programs and inclusive political solutions are needed to assure local populations that their interests can be realized through nonviolent means. International partners of Sahelian countries as well as African regional organizations should also provide stronger support to democratic regimes and those that are implementing democratic reforms, as they possess the legitimacy and responsiveness needed to address societal demands.

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### **Countering the Lord’s Resistance Army in Central Africa**

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Led by Joseph Kony since the late 1980s, the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) is a brutal militia force that survives by massacring civilians, looting villages, and abducting civilians to serve as fighters, porters, and sex slaves. LRA operations have spread from northern Uganda to cover an expansive territory including eastern Congo, the Central African Republic, and southern Sudan. Much of this territory is outside the day-to-day control of governments in the region. Since 2008, Uganda has pursued LRA forces across this expansive territory with only limited success.

In the Center for Strategic Research’s Strategic Forum No. 270, Andre Le Sage points out that in 2010 the Obama administration began implementing a U.S. strategy to increase support for regional and peacekeeping operations against the LRA. To succeed, Le Sage notes that anti-LRA operations need to shift from an open-ended and under-resourced chase to a more comprehensive, integrated, and supported effort involving four major lines of effort: 1) increase protection of civilians; 2) apprehend or remove from the battlefield Kony

and senior commanders; 3) promote the defection, disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of remaining LRA fighters; and 4) increase humanitarian access and provide continued relief to affected communities.

Ultimately, the challenge of countering and defeating the LRA requires the presence of an adequate number of forces who are willing and able to protect civilian populations, isolate individual LRA units, and strike at their remote positions. Diplomatic and aid efforts are needed to reintegrate combatants and address northern Ugandan political grievances. Success depends on the political will and military capability of Uganda, its African neighbors, and United Nations peacekeepers to separate LRA units from civilian populations and build robust capabilities to track and strike LRA positions. These requirements beg the question of whether or not the U.S. will dedicate sufficient resources to overcome current shortfalls.

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### Operationalizing Anticipatory Governance

In this Center for Complex Operations' *PRISM* (2, no. 4) article, Leon Fuerth asserts that the U.S. is confronted by a new class of complex and fast-moving challenges that simultaneously engage our social, economic, and political systems. However, the U.S. Government is without an integrated foresight system, a networked approach to the management of complex priorities, or a formal feedback system to facilitate system learning. The consequences of this are an increasing number of collisions with "unforeseeable events," and economic opportunities lost to competitors who are consistently pursuing winning strategies.

Anticipatory Governance would address the twin phenomena of acceleration and complexity and help identify otherwise unforeseeable events earlier in time. It is a system of institutions, rules, and norms that provide a way to use foresight, networks, and feedback to reduce risk, improve planning and operations by mobilizing the full capacities of government, and increase capacity to respond and mitigate events at earlier stages, just barely visible at the event horizons. To implement Anticipatory Governance, three adaptations are required: 1) a procedure for developing a foresight process integrated with

policymaking; 2) a network suitable for broad-based, whole-of-government responsiveness; and 3) a feedback system to monitor interactions between policies and consequences. The Anticipatory Governance approach could be put into place efficiently and quickly by means of presidential authority.

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### New Directions in U.S. National Security Strategy, Defense Plans, and Diplomacy: A Review of Official Strategic Documents

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In the Center for Technology and National Security Policy's *New Directions in U.S. National Security Strategy, Defense Plans, and Diplomacy: A Review of Official Strategic Documents*, Richard L. Kugler examines seven major recent studies that together put forth a comprehensive blueprint for major global changes in U.S. national security strategy, defense plans, and diplomacy. The book discusses their individual contents, compares their complex interrelationships, and evaluates their strengths and shortfalls. Five of these studies were written by the U.S. Government and two were written by a team of independent experts working with official sponsorship. They are: 1) *National Security Strategy*, issued by the White House in May 2010; 2) *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (QDR Report), issued by the Department of Defense (DOD) in February 2010; 3) *The QDR in Perspective: Meeting America's National Strategy Needs in the 21st Century*, mandated by Congress and DOD and issued by an independent study group in August 2010; 4) *Nuclear Posture Review Report* issued by DOD in April 2010; 5) *Ballistic Missile Defense Review Report*, issued by DOD in February 2010; 6) *NATO 2020: Assured Security: Dynamic Engagement*, issued by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Group of Experts in May 2010; and 7) *Leading Through Civilian Power: The First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review*, issued by the Department of State (DOS) in December 2010.

While each of these studies deserves to be judged on their own merits, they are collectively important as they create a comprehensive blueprint for how U.S. security efforts are to evolve. Together, they argue that

if their policies are pursued cohesively, the U.S. can defend its homeland, advance its interests abroad, be prepared for future missions, help defend its allies, and mitigate dangerous international trends while preserving peace and preventing war. It concludes that while these studies are well-written, cogently argued, and articulate many valuable innovations for DOD, DOS, and other government agencies, all of them leave lingering, controversial issues that require further thinking and analysis as future U.S. national security policy evolves in a changing and dangerous world.

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### **Policing and COIN Operations: Lessons Learned, Strategies and Future Directions**

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The Center for Technology and National Security Policy's (CTNSP) *Policing and COIN Operations: Lessons Learned, Strategies and Future Directions*, by Samuel Musa, John Morgan, and Matt Keegan, is the result of a September 2010 workshop that was devoted to examining the role of policing in counterinsurgency (COIN) operations. At the time of its writing, the U.S. and other members of International Security Assistance Force had been in conflict for nearly a decade in Iraq and Afghanistan. What started as more conventional or traditional fights has degenerated over time into insurgency warfare, something U.S. forces have had to relearn and rebuild to fight. COIN is different from armored vehicles rolling through the Fulda Gap or the race to Baghdad; it is a grassroots battle that not only requires military force, but security established at the local level through everyday police presence that represents the rule of law, the national government, and safety and stability locally. It against this backdrop that CTNSP and the Combating Terrorism Technical Support Office came together to look at policing and COIN and the way, methods, and techniques that could be shared to help overcome the insurgencies Coalition forces face.

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### **Space Weather and the U.S. Electrical Grid**

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During the week of October 3-7, the Center for Technology and National Security Policy (CTNSP) hosted three events that addressed the issue of space weather and its potential impact on the U.S. electrical

grid. The first event to address the topic was an October 3 roundtable exercise done in collaboration between the Energy & Environmental Security Policy Program and CTNSP, and in conjunction with the Electromagnetic Pulse (EMP) Congressional Caucus. The event focused on the impact of an 1859 Carrington-type geomagnetic storm event on the national electric grid and modern infrastructure. The discussion examined the cascading and catastrophic failures via a massive electromagnetic pulse EMP-E3 event caused by severe space weather and the national capacity to respond to such events involving utilities, industries, national policy, and extended recovery time for the electric grid. This event was followed by the October 4-5 "Secure Grid '11" conference co-hosted by the Energy & Environmental Security Policy Program and CTNSP. This event was jointly sponsored by U.S. Northern Command and the Department of Homeland Security, and focused on the effects of a major geomagnetic storm on the Nation's electrical infrastructure and preparedness gaps and management challenges to short notice warning and extended-duration power outages. The last conference, conducted on October 6, was again co-hosted by the Energy & Environmental Security Policy Program and CTNSP. This public-private conference with a focus on nationwide effects of extreme space weather on critical infrastructures was also done in conjunction with the U.S. congressional EMP Caucus and the InfraGard National Members Alliance

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### **Strengthening Government Laboratory Science and Technology Programs: Some Thoughts for the Department of Homeland Security**

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In the Center for Technology and National Security Policy's (CTNSP) Defense & Technology Paper No. 83, Samuel Musa, Richard Chait, Vincent Russo, and Donna Back examine various management practices and implications of laboratory administration for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The paper summarizes the second phase of a research and analysis project that stemmed from the initial work which provided DHS Science and

Technology (S&T) leadership with examples of practical approaches to risk-informed decisionmaking and metrics for program and project selection. The second phase was undertaken to provide additional relevant information to DHS as it seeks to strengthen its laboratory programs.

Drawing upon lessons learned provided by a study team composed of former Department of Defense (DOD) laboratory directors, the paper presents a number of recommendations for use by DHS S&T officials. First, the paper recommends that peer reviews be conducted for the DHS laboratories to evaluate the S&T programs and identify areas of strength and weakness, as well as potential areas of collaboration with other internal or external laboratories in government, industry, and universities. These reviews can enhance the posture of the laboratories as well as the responsiveness to the customer base. It also recommended that the DHS labs have strong linkages with the DHS University Centers of Excellence (CoEs). Currently, the linkages of the labs to the CoEs are processed through the focal points at the divisions, which is a cumbersome process, instead of direct connectivity at the working level. The paper also calls for the laboratories to conduct a self-evaluation by utilizing the metrics of successful laboratory management identified by the Federal Advisory Commission on Consolidation and Conversion of Defense Research and Development Laboratories. This evaluation could provide a measure of the general health of the laboratories and reveal the areas that need to be strengthened. Finally, there was general agreement among the former DOD laboratory directors that a basic research program was essential to the technical success of their laboratories. Furthermore, a meaningful and in-depth review process of the technical program was necessary.

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### **Enhancing Information and Communication: Issues for Policymakers, Ambassadors, and Commanders**

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On August 17, the Center for Technology and National Security Policy conducted a closed, senior-level workshop intended to identify long term strategies for

prioritizing information sharing as a critical enabler for mission success. The event brought together 48 high-level participants, including ambassadors, policymakers, senior military officials, and members of both non governmental organizations and international communities. The event centered on ways and means that information and communication technologies can benefit high-level officials in promptly and efficiently communicating their message to the general public, to interested parties, and across multiple organizations, both domestically and internationally. At the core of the discussion was the realization that the U.S. Government (USG) does not always take advantage, or recognize the utility, of using current and emerging information and communication technologies in its operations, doctrine, or planning. Such a shortfall often leads to numerous missed opportunities, and the participants cited numerous examples of such omissions.

Some of the questions posed to the attendees included: 1) what formal and informal incentives motivate personnel to share information? 2) what will be the long-term effect of a more permissive information sharing environment on policy-making? 3) how should USG and non-USG practitioners contribute to a coordinated information architecture when sharing a common area of operations? and 4) do information and communication projects offer a common ground for cooperation among stakeholders that may have divergent long and short term interests? The workshop sought to create an action plan for prioritizing information and communication, with participants deliberating and emphasizing the importance of establishing clear and comprehensive long-range strategies from a political, operational, technological, and cultural perspective in order to implement institutional change.

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### **Building Civilian-Military Security Capacity**

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The Center for Complex Operations (CCO) recently partnered with Australia's Asia Pacific Civil Military Centre of Excellence to explore the challenges associated with achieving security in conflict prone and postconflict

environments. This builds on the previous work CCO has done on building local policing capacity and on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), which resulted in the book *Monopoly of Force*. The two organizations co-organized a conference entitled “Building Security Capacity” in September for the purpose of: 1) promoting understanding of the role of security actors, including the role of security forces (armed services, law enforcement actor, and civilian oversight institutions) in peace and stabilization operations; and 2) exploring lessons from state and society transformation through specific end-of-conflict and transition activities, including DDR and capacity-building. Detailed outputs from the conference are contained in two articles, “Patronage versus Professionalism in New Security Institutions” by Kimberly Marten and “Columbia: Updating the Mission” by Carlos Ospina Ovalle, in the most recent edition of CCO’s journal *PRISM* (2, no. 4). The conference launches a broader effort and helps articulate the parameters of ongoing and future research pertaining to unconventional challenges and nontraditional roles for armed forces, particularly in developing countries.

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### Global Prospect/Perspectiva Global

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The Center for Applied Strategic Learning conducted its third National Security Policy Analysis Forum (NSPAF) exercise, “Global Prospect/Perspectiva Global,” on August 23. This exercise represented the first time NSPAF conducted an exercise at the request of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) Policy with foreign attendance—this time from Brazil. The exercise provided a forum for senior OSD leaders and Brazilian officials (10 in total from the Ministry of Defense and Embassy of Brazil) an opportunity to explore their evolving relationship as both navigate an increasingly complex global environment.

The preponderance of discussion in “Global Prospect” focused on determining what U.S. and Brazilian interests and areas of influence/ability were within Western Africa both as individual countries and in partnership with each other. Each country’s representatives walked away with

a better understanding and trust of each other’s posited response actions. Participants also indicated a desire to conduct similar such events in the future in order to continue the very enlightening and productive dialogue.

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### Connections 2011

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The Center for Applied Strategic Learning (CASL) hosted the “Connections 2011” conference in early August with over 100 participants from every sector of gaming: private gaming companies, government and military agencies, gaming hobbyists, contracting companies, academics, and many more. The conference included keynote speakers, play-tests, and demos of the latest gaming technology and methodology, panel discussions, working groups, and networking opportunities.

“Connections” is the only national conference dedicated specifically to wargaming. The conference advances the field of wargaming by bringing together all elements of the field so participants can exchange information on achievements, best practices, and needs. The conference allowed CASL to greatly increase its outreach to the broader gaming community and to place NDU at the forefront of efforts to build a stronger, more interconnected, rigorous gaming community. The conference was also an opportunity to showcase how CASL’s unique position at NDU makes it possible to conduct policy-level gaming with real policy impact.

The “Connections 2011” interdisciplinary wargaming conference successfully moved the gaming discipline towards more interconnection among gamers and more professional dialogue in the field. This outreach effort on the part of NDU shows promise of paying dividends well into the future.

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### Exercise Pearl Conflict

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From August 30 to September 2, the Center for Applied Strategic Learning (CASL) conducted “Pearl Conflict,” the kickoff event for the College of International Security Affairs’ 10-month Counterterrorism Fellows Program. “Pearl Conflict” was set in the Philippines in

2012, and explored the Government of the Philippines' options to combat domestic terrorism and insurgency. The four-move game had students develop policy, strategy, and a plan to resource implementation of the strategy.

"Pearl Conflict" was the first CASL strategic exercise to employ a systems dynamics model to support exercise adjudication. Based on U.S. Army Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, and other writings on whole-of-government and population-centric counterinsurgency, the model laid out the effects of a host nation to fight insurgency and terrorism without foreign military assistance. The model highlighted interconnected lines of operation and second- and third-order effects. The model was used in conjunction with Gemstone, a CASL-designed web-based counterinsurgency/counterterrorism adjudication model to determine the effects of participants' policy proposals, resourcing decisions, and military strategy. Four observers from the JFK Special Warfare Center and Air Force Research Labs attended the exercise. The personnel from the JFK Center found "Pearl Conflict" to be suited for the needs of their irregular warfare program, and will propose that the center partner with CASL to develop it further.

